

FY13 Q4 Report: July – August 2013



Awareness training on children's' rights

Submitted: October 31, 2013

Immediate Protection and NFI Assistance to LRA-Affected Populations in Southeastern CAR
 Funded by USAID / Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)

COUNTRY CONTACT	HEADQUARTERS CONTACT	PROJECT SUMMARY
Su'ad JARBAWI Country Director Address: Avenue de l'Indépendance Quartier des évolués, SICA I Bangui, Central African Republic Telephone: + 236 70 93 32 38 Email: sjarbawi@field.mercycorps.org	Katherine Daniels Senior Program Officer Address: 45 SW Ankeny Street Portland, OR 97204 Telephone: +1 503 896 5802 Email: kdaniels@mercycorps.org	Award No: AID-OFDA-G-12-00076 Start Date: May 1, 2012 End Date: June 30, 2012 ¹ Report Date: October 31, 2013 Total Award: USD \$522,013

¹ The award was originally scheduled to end on April 30, 2013, but Mercy Corps received a no-cost extension until June 30, 2013, and later an unfunded modification extending the program until August 31st, 2013.

1. Executive Summary

In May 2012, USAID/OFDA funded the Immediate Protection and NFI Assistance program in response to the urgent protection, psychosocial and relief needs of conflict-affected communities in the southeastern part of Mbomou Prefecture of the Central African Republic. Following the ongoing civil conflict and LRA attacks since 2008, Mercy Corps, with funding from USAID/OFDA, is building upon the foundation of its previous protection programming in Rafai, funded by UNICEF, and leveraging previously established community based mechanisms established under the UNICEF program to extend assistance outward to the towns of Selim, Dembia and surrounding areas. The OFDA program promotes psychosocial and support services for survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), establishes activities for child protection, and provides non-food relief commodities that specifically target LRA conflict-affected populations.

This report covers the period from July 2013 to August 2013, almost disrupted by political events that led to the overthrow of the François Bozizé regime by the Seleka coalition, with the consequences of insecurity and looting that followed.

In July 2013, the activities were partially suspended, with limited presence of staff in the field due to insecurity. Activities resumed in July and August, and focused particularly on the following:

- Resume the Listening Center's activities and continue providing psychosocial support of LRA and GBV affected survivors
- Remobilization of protection committees and other community networks for effective protection monitoring and community sensitization on GBV
- Finalize the second round of youth vocational trainings
- Follow up with the second round of play therapy club activities
- The program final evaluation was carried out with a total of 243 people (123 women, 120 men)

2. Program Overview

Mercy Corps' Immediate Protection and NFI Assistance program is a \$522,013 program designed to support community structures in order to address protection issues and enhance the capacities of LRA-affected communities to develop positive coping mechanisms, restore assets and build economic livelihoods in the Mbomou prefecture of south-eastern CAR. The program targets a total 33,831 LRA conflict-affected persons, including 5,500 displaced persons as a result of the LRA conflict. The program has three main components: 1) psychosocial and capacity-building support to protect children and youth by building on existing community-based support mechanisms; 2) gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response to LRA-affected GBV survivors via psychosocial, health and economic support services; and 3) distribution of non-food item (NFI) kits to internally displaced persons (IDP) and returnee households in the intervention zone. The program places an emphasis on leveraging previously-established community-based mechanisms, such as child protection committees, 'Sports for Peace and Life' mentors who help educate children on HIV/AIDS and conflict negotiation, and GBV focal points who raise awareness on GBV prevention and refer survivors to the support center. The program also empowers beneficiaries to play an active role in the implementation of activities.

3. Security

Following the insecurity outbreak caused by the Seleka contingent in March and for some months after, Mercy Corps returned to the field with a small team in June 2013. Mercy Corps' Bangassou office had been looted and largely damaged, so a new base in the region had to be established. Unfortunately in mid July there was a period of friction between the local population and the Seleka, forcing an evacuation of staff. Then, on August 23rd, 2013 two Mercy Corps vehicles were ambushed by unidentified actors on the road between Bangassou and Rafai, and two staff members were shot and wounded. Following this incident, expatriate staff members were evacuated from the

region, as those responsible for the attack were not known and there was a risk that Mercy Corps had been intentionally targeted as an international NGO. For security reasons, all activities outside a 5 km radius of Bangassou town were suspended. After a security audit led by the Mercy Corps Regional Security Director, staff returned to Bangassou in September, although the situation has remained tense.

4. Performance Summary

3.1 Protection

SECTOR #1 Protection	<i>Objective: LRA-affected populations access protection services</i>		
Budget:	\$456,190.00		
Beneficiaries Targeted	Total: 33,831	IDPs Targeted	Total: 5,500
Beneficiaries Reached	11,035 beneficiaries (4,000 IDPs)		
Geographic Area (s)	Mbomou Prefecture in Southeastern CAR, including the towns of Rafai, Dembia and Selim.		
Sub-Sector: Child Protection			
INDICATORS	BASELINE	TARGET	PROGRESS
Number of people trained in child protection issues	Play Therapy Mentors : 6 (5 males, 1 female) Child Protection Committee Members: 36 (28 males, 8 females) Total: 42 (33 males, 9 females)	Play Therapy Mentors : 36 Child Protection Committee Members: 100 Total: 136	Play Therapy Mentors : 36 (7 females, 29 males) Child Protection Committee Members: 92 (57 males, 35 females) Total: 128 (42 females, 86 males)
Number of and percent increase in number of mechanisms/systems to report/refer child protection issues	Play Therapy Mentors : 6 (5 males, 1 female) Child Protection Committee Members: 36 (28 males, 8 females) Total: 42 (33 males, 9 females)	Play Therapy Mentors : 36 Child Protection Committee Members: 100 Total: 136	Play Therapy Mentors : 36 (7 females, 29 males) Child Protection Committee Members: 92 (57 males, 35 females) Total: 128 (42 females, 86 males) 304% increase
Number and percent of targeted children reporting an improvement in their sense of safety and well being	0 children	855 children 75% of targeted children	To be measured at final evaluation
Number of microprojects implemented*	0 microprojects	25 microprojects	15 micro projects were started but unfortunately most of training materials and exit kits were looted, including the kits stored in Mercy corps' office in Rafai by Seleka coalition.

SECTOR #1 Protection	<i>Objective: LRA-affected populations access protection services</i>		
Budget:	\$456,190.00		
Beneficiaries Targeted	Total: 33,831	IDPs Targeted	Total: 5,500
Beneficiaries Reached	11,035 beneficiaries (4,000 IDPs)		
Geographic Area (s)	Mbomou Prefecture in Southeastern CAR, including the towns of Rafai, Dembia and Selim.		
Number and percent of youth that report increased independence after vocational training*	0 youth	54 youth 90% of trained youth	54 youth to date 99% of trained youth to date
Sub-Sector: Gender-based Violence (GBV) Prevention and Response			
Number and percent of community members who can report at least two negative effects of GBV on their community	45%	70%	83% or 101 women and 102 men
Number and percent of target population reporting increased access to Gender-based Violence (GBV) services	0 survivors	500 survivors 75% report increased access	411 survivors since the beginning of the program; 83 survivors during the reporting period. 98% of survivors assisted by the center report increased access to date.
Number of males sensitized in Gender-based Violence (GBV) issues	0 males	5,000 males	A total of 7810 persons have been sensitized; including 5,097 men and 2713 boys.
Number of LRA-affected GBV survivors that receive psychosocial support*	0 LRA-affected GBV survivors	500 LRA-affected GBV survivors	388 survivors since the beginning of the program – 335 females and 53 males.
Number of cases referred to partner medical centers for treatment*	0 cases referred	75 cases referred	107 cases referred to health centers to date. 81 females and 26 males.
Number of women who report increased economic independence after IGA training*	0 women	60 women	60 women have been trained to date (30 in Agoumar/Rafai center, 15 in Dembia and 15 in Selim. The number who report increased economic independence will be reported in the final report to be submitted November 2013.

SECTOR #1 Protection	<i>Objective: LRA-affected populations access protection services</i>		
Budget:	\$456,190.00		
Beneficiaries Targeted	Total: 33,831	IDPs Targeted	Total: 5,500
Beneficiaries Reached	11,035 beneficiaries (4,000 IDPs)		
Geographic Area (s)	Mbomou Prefecture in Southeastern CAR, including the towns of Rafai, Dembia and Selim.		
Number of pilot Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) trained and provided with access to financial services *	0 VSLAs	5 VSLAs	5 VSLA groups have been trained since the beginning of the program composed of female IDPs in Rafai.

*Program impact indicators identified by Mercy Corps

Sector Summary:

Play Therapy activities:

During the reporting period, a second round of Play Therapy sessions was completed with groups in Dembia, Guerekindo, Rafai centre, Agoumar, Loungba-Kpette and Selim. Mercy Corps set the target at 30 participants per group and aimed to maintain a gender balance with equal numbers of boys and girls in each group, but in reality, the majority of the teams had more boys than girls. Earlier in the program, for reasons of security, (the attack on the village Kpette in November 2012 and the events which shook the country at large), the teams which were supposed to gather the children from Kpette and Loungba were unable to function. Therefore, instead of 36 teams, we finished the two cycles with 34 teams. Ultimately, the project reached 1020 children including 442 girls and 578 boys, or about 94% of the target of 1080.

During the reporting period, 15 trainings were held for members of youth clubs in the local area. In total 50 members were trained on management and organization of the children's clubs.

In addition, each club of 30 children elected 10 members to receive further training.

There was a follow up survey held in August and the pre and post test results (between January and August) indicated a 23% increase in reporting an improvement in the children's sense of safety and well being.

Economic Independence

15 women in Dembia in July and 15 in Selim in August received socio economic training prior to receiving their cash transfers. Also in July 3 types of trainings were given to youth beneficiaries from Gerekindo and Dembia. The subjects were animal rearing, woodwork and mechanics.

Play therapy participant numbers and "graduate" numbers (those who were present for at least 30 of the 40 sessions).

	First Wave			Second Wave			TOTAL
	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	
Participants	217	293	510	225	285	510	1020
Graduates	188	259	447	161	194	355	802

3.2 Logistics, support, and relief commodities

SECTOR #2 Logistics, support and relief commodities	<i>Objective: LRA-affected displaced and returnee households access essential NFIs</i>		
Budget:	\$65,823.00		

Beneficiaries Targeted	Total: 3,500	IDPs Targeted	Total: 3,500
Beneficiaries Reached	5,860 beneficiaries reached (3,150 IDPs and 2710 returnees)		
Geographic Area (s)	Mbomou Prefecture in Southeastern CAR, including the towns of Rafai, Dembia and Selim.		
Sub-Sector: Non-food Items (NFIs)			
INDICATORS	BASELINE	TARGET	PROGRESS
Total number of NFIs distributed, by type	0 NFIs	Refer to Annex 1 for NFIs by type	1,252 NFIs
Total USD cost of NFIs, by type	0 NFIs	Refer to Annex 1 for cost of NFIs	\$ 25,375.52 for 500 NFI
Total number of beneficiaries receiving NFIs by type, in compliance with Sphere standards	0 individuals	3,500 individuals	5,860 individuals have received a full kit of NFIs
Number of NFIs distributed, by type, to LRA-affected child and youth headed households*	0 NFIs	29 child / youth headed households	34 child / youth headed households to-date have received a full kit of NFIs. Post Distribution Monitoring will be done during the project evaluation.

**Program impact indicators identified by Mercy Corps*

Sector Summary:

The distribution of NFIs was wholly achieved during the last quarter. A post distribution survey will be completed during the final evaluation.

5. Conclusion

During this reporting period, the program was completed and all planned activities were carried out. Although items were stolen from the Rafai office in terms of training materials and apprenticeship kits, and it was difficult to replace these items locally and quickly, Mercy Corps continued with the soft aspect of the program - training individuals in management of the clubs and small business training with the IGAs. For certain, there have been access problems linked to the dilapidated state of the roads and insecurity in the area but this has not seriously impacted the implementation of activities. It is expected that security will improve and that Mercy Corps will be able to continue income generating activities and protection capacity building further afield rather than having to rely on the community committees to build local awareness. The next OFDA-funded program in the South-east (the South East Recovery and Protection Project (SERAP) will build on the relationships currently effective and in place and the ready formed committees to further build capacity in the local environment to be more aware of and supportive of the protection role in the community.

Mercy Corps has worked in close collaboration with other humanitarian actors in the area (notably Acted and Merlin), in order to share operational information. This has meant that by liaising with local security focal points, Mercy Corps has been able to carry out training sessions without putting its staff or beneficiaries in undue danger. The effect has been that Mercy Corps activities are viewed as safe by the community and they are fully supported when they take place. One underlying point is that as one of the few iONGs in the area, the presence of Mercy Corps representatives gives the community a sense of security and reinforces a positive outlook in what is an area filled with fear and uncertainty.